



# ST GILES' CHURCH, DURHAM

## GILESGATE REMEMBERS



A SERVICE OF MUSIC, READINGS, POETRY AND  
REFLECTION TO COMMEMORATE THE  
CENTENARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME.

**SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> JULY  
2016 AT 6PM**

**SOMME 100**

THE ROYAL BRITISH  
LEGION



# The Battle of the Somme

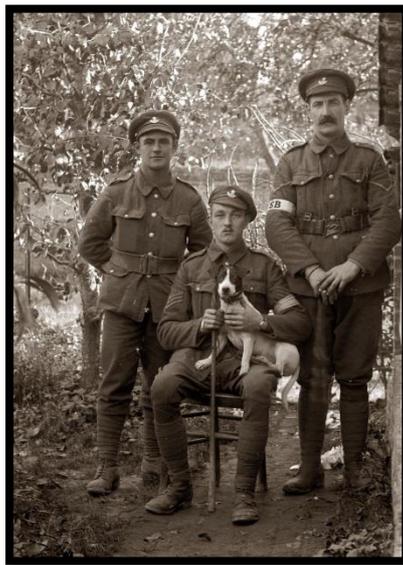
The Battle of the Somme began on 1 July 1916. At 7.30a.m., on a 14 mile front running north of the River Somme in France. 60,000 British soldiers climbed out of their trenches and began to move across No Man's Land. Within 1 hour, over half of these men were dead or wounded.

These soldiers thought that the German defences had been destroyed by the previous 8 days of British artillery bombardment. In fact, many of the shells had failed to explode and the German barbed wire, trenches, machine-guns and artillery were still waiting for them. On the first day, 100,000 British soldiers joined the battle. By the end of the day, there were 58,000 casualties, including over 19,000 dead. It was the worst day in the history of the British Army and remains the greatest loss in a single day for Britain.

The battle did, however, achieve its purpose. The French Army was being destroyed at Verdun, so the British and French attacked at the Somme, forcing the Germans to divert resources and men from Verdun in its defence. The Somme tore the heart out of the German Army and, without this diversion, the French might have been defeated and the war lost.

The battle ended on 18 November 1916, because the rain turned the battlefield into an impassable sea of mud. The British and French had gained 12 kilometres of ground and suffered over 400,000 and 200,000 casualties respectively. The Germans sustained 500,000 casualties. Of the 15,000 soldiers of the Durham Light Infantry who had fought on the Somme, over half had been wounded, killed, or reported missing.

Historians continue to debate about the successes and failures of the battle, but in this service, we remember those whose lives were lost, or damaged by injury, trauma or bereavement and hold them before God. As we ponder this terrible battle, so we seek again wisdom from Christ, the Prince of Peace.

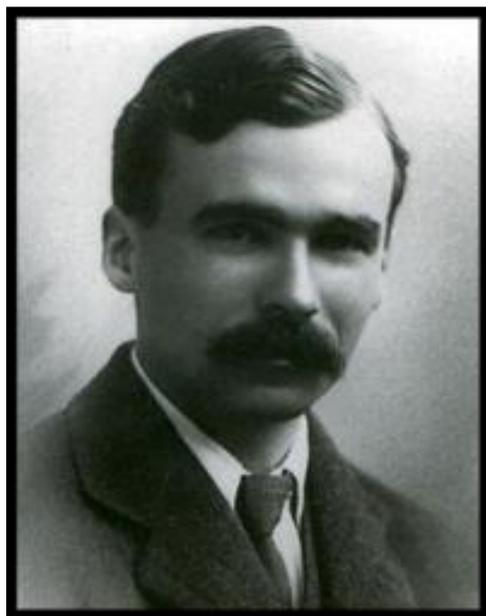


*Soldiers of the Durham Light Infantry on the rear lines of the Somme*

## *Before the Service*

We listen to the music of George Butterworth (1885 – 1916) and his compositions *A Shropshire Lad* composed in 1912 and first performed in October 1913 at the Leeds Festival and *Two English Idylls* (1911) and *The Banks of Green Willow* (1913) which were given first performances in February 1914.

When World War I broke in August 1914 Butterworth immediately volunteered and joined the British Army as a Private in the Duke of Cornwall's Regiment. He was later commissioned as the Subaltern (2nd Lieutenant) of the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion Durham Light Infantry. He was awarded the Military Cross at the Battle of the Somme for his action on the 19 July 1916 but sadly killed by a sniper on 5 August 1916.



George Butterworth (1885 – 1916)

*The congregation stands*

**Hymn** O God our help in ages past

**1. O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast,  
and our eternal home:**

**2. Beneath the shadow of thy  
throne,  
thy saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is thine arm alone,  
and our defence is sure.**

**3. Before the hills in order stood,  
or earth received her frame,  
from everlasting thou art God,  
to endless years the same.**

**4. A thousand ages in thy sight  
are like an evening gone;  
short as the watch that ends the  
night  
before the rising sun.**

**5. Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
bears all its sons away;  
they fly, forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the opening day.**

**6. O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
be thou our guide while troubles last,  
and our eternal home!**

*Words: Paraphrase of Psalm 90  
Isaac Watts (1674 – 1748)*

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you  
**And also with you.**

We gather today with the jarring images of the waste and ruin of war imprinted on our minds and imaginations, to remember all those who were involved in the Battle of the Somme. We honour the memory of those who inhabited that war-shattered landscape; those who endured the mud and the blood; those who showed great courage and loyalty to comrades at arms; those who saw the unspeakable sight of bodies broken; those whose minds were numbed by the noise of bombardment, and those whose eyes saw the ugliness of disfigured, weeping and frightened faces. For all who were engaged in combat, those who tended the maimed and injured, the fallen, and for those families who still hold the memories of deceased soldiers, we ask for God's mercy, and for ourselves, the grace to remember well.

**We will remember them.**

As we ask that God's will may be done in this and every place, so we pray together as Jesus Christ has taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

*The congregation sits*

## From the Trenches

### Letter from 2nd Lieutenant Eric Rupert Heaton

28 June 1916

My Darling Mother and Father,

I am writing this on the eve of my first action. Tomorrow, we go to the attack in the greatest battle the British army has ever fought. I cannot quite express my feelings on this night and I cannot tell if it is God's will that I shall come through – but if I fall in battle then I have no regrets save for my loved ones I leave behind. It is a great cause and I came out willingly to serve my King and Country.

No one had such parents as you have been to me giving me such splendid opportunities and always thinking of my welfare at great self-sacrifice to yourselves.

This life abroad has taught me many things, chiefly the fine character of the British Race to put up with hardship with wonderful cheerfulness.

If I fall, do not let things be black for you. Be cheerful and you will be living life always to my memory.

I thank God for my brother and sisters who have all been very much to me.

Well I cannot write more now. You are all in my thoughts as I enter this first battle. May God go with me.

With my love to you all.

Always, your loving son,

Eric

*Letter from Durham County Record Office*

*Born in 1886, son of the late Rev Daniel Heaton and Mrs Heaton, of Cressbrook, 46 Pembroke Crescent, Hove, Sussex. Eric was 20 when he died on 1 July 1916. Before he volunteered, he was a pupil at the Royal Grammar School Guildford and was expecting to study to become a member of the medical and dental profession.*

**Choir**      **Psalm 23** – *to a chant composed by Ivor Gurney. Gurney composed this to steady his nerves while serving in the trenches and it is alleged he sang this before “going over the top” during the Battle of the Somme in 1916.*

## **Transcript of the Diary of Private W. Roberts**

"Opened a violent bombardment on the German lines. 7am a village blown up by our mine and 7.30 advance started. We were the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion to go over, which we did about an hour later. The short but terrible rush through the fierce curtain of fire with men falling on all sides I shall never forget. High explosive shells fell all round us.

The sights I saw are too terrible to write about and men almost blown to pieces were lying side by side Unable to proceed further, the order to retire was given and I thanked God that I came through the terrible ordeal unhurt. I went to work in our front line at night but had to come away as it was almost blown to pieces. There again I saw dead and wounded lying side by side Some were moaning and others had so far lost their reason that they were laughing and singing.

July 2nd

Resting in one of the trenches but went to carry wounded out at 11. The communication trench out, was packed with stretchers Tear shells were sent over which burst about the entrance of our trenches and my eyes were running with water. Returned to our resting trench about day-break.

July 3rd

On sentry duty in the battered front line, dead men, rifles spades and equipment were lying about and there I had to stay till 2 am next morning. 4<sup>th</sup> Left the front line.

*Born in Boston, Lincolnshire, and lived in Cambridgeshire with his parents, Caleb and Amelia. Enlisted in the 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion Durham Light Infantry. Roberts died of wounds on 15 June 1917, aged 23, and is buried at Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun near Arras.*

## **Transcript of the Statement of Private H. D. Jackson**

*75<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps*

No one can describe what the battle of the Somme was really like unless they were there. It was one continuous stream of wounded and dead and dying. You had to forget all sentiment. It was a case of getting on with the job. We went into action on the Somme the midnight before the action started. We took over a dressing station called Black Horse Bridge, at Authuille Wood. The field ambulance we were taking over from were taking rather a long time getting out, and we were all crouched down outside, waiting to get in, while shells were bursting all around us. We used to put stretchers on wheels (we could run them down the road if there was a road at any time.) Bits of shrapnel were sparking on these wheels, and we were wondering if we were going to live to get into this dressing station. Anyway we eventually got in...

...We had four days and four nights there, and it was one continual stream of wounded. Our dugout was almost like a tunnel dug into the bank, and we used to have acetylene

lights. Blasts from nearby shells would put these lights out, and the fumes from the light would be terrible, and we'd light it again.

I was assisting the doctor, holding the tray and instruments and torch for him. With the fumes and that, I started feeling faint, and he looked at me and said, "Are you all right, Jackson?" I said, "I am feeling a bit queer, sir." He said, "Go to the door, get some fresh air", and he called another man to take over. This happened two or three times, but we had to keep going. This doctor was Captain Beatty, who became a Harley St specialist after the war. He was really marvellous. I don't know how he stuck it. He seemed to just carry on, as if he was in the theatre. He looked like a skeleton himself, thin and white.

I always remember one chap who was shell-shocked very bad. It took four or five of us to get him into the ambulance and hold him down. He thought we were taking him to the trenches again, instead of taking him to the hospital. And I remember one wounded man, who gave me a letter he had written. "See this goes," he said, "it's to my wife, bless her heart!" So I said, "Right, I will see that it goes!" a bit later, I went into the dugout to sleep. It was where they put the dead before they were picked up. I laid down on this improvised bunk, made out of wire netting, and I happened to see an arm on a stretcher, poking out from a blanket. I pulled the blanket over, and it was the chap who'd given me the letter. When things happened like that it really brought it home to you. Life seemed so cheap.

*Read by Mr John Eden, RAMC.*

### **Reading - 2 Samuel 1: 17-27**

David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan. (He ordered that The Song of the Bow be taught to the people of Judah; it is written in the Book of Jasher.) He said: Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon your high places! How the mighty have fallen! Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon; or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice, the daughters of the uncircumcised will exult.

You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor bounteous fields! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, anointed with oil no more. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, nor the sword of Saul return empty.

Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely! In life and in death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you with crimson, in luxury, who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle!

Jonathan lies slain upon your high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; greatly beloved were you to me; your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

*Short reflection*

*The congregation stands*

**Hymn** O God of earth and altar



**1. O God of earth and altar,  
bow down and hear our cry,  
our earthly rulers falter,  
our people drift and die;  
the walls of gold entomb us,  
the swords of scorn divide,  
take not thy thunder from us,  
but take away our pride.**

**2. From all that terror teaches,  
from lies of tongue and pen,  
from all the easy speeches  
that comfort cruel men,  
from sale and profanation  
of honor, and the sword,  
from sleep and from damnation,  
deliver us, good Lord.**

**3. Tie in a living tether  
the prince and priest and thrall,  
bind all our lives together,  
smite us and save us all;  
in ire and exultation  
afire with faith, and free,  
lift up a living nation,  
a single sword to thee.**

*Words: G. K. Chesterton (1874 – 1936)  
Music: English Traditional Melody  
Arranged R. Vaughan Williams*

*The congregation sits*

# A Poet's Reflection

## Two Fusiliers

By Robert Graves

And have we done with War at last?  
Well, we've been lucky devils both,  
And there's no need of pledge or oath  
To bind our lovely friendship fast,

By firmer stuff  
Close bound enough.

By wire and wood and stake we're bound,  
By Fricourt and by Festubert,  
By whipping rain, by the sun's glare,  
By all the misery and loud sound,  
By a Spring day,  
By Picard clay.

Show me the two so closely bound  
As we, by the red bond of blood,  
By friendship, blossoming from mud,  
By Death: we faced him, and we found  
Beauty in Death,  
In dead men breath.

*As a Lieutenant with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, Graves was so badly wounded in the Somme that he was nearly given up for dead.*

**Choir**      Nunc Dimittis in a setting by George Dyson.

*George Dyson (1883 – 1964) was born in Halifax, West Yorkshire. In 1914, he joined the Royal Fusiliers, and during this time wrote a widely used training pamphlet on the use of grenades. He was invalided home with shell-shock in 1916 and after recovering, he joined the Royal Air Force.*

## **A Soldier's Cemetery**

by John William Streets

Behind that long and lonely trenched line  
To which men come and go, where brave men die,  
There is a yet unmarked and unknown shrine,  
A broken plot, a soldier's cemetery.

There lie the flower of youth, the men who scorn'd  
To live (so died) when languished Liberty:  
Across their graves flowerless and unadorned  
Still scream the shells of each artillery.  
When war shall cease this lonely unknown spot

Of many a pilgrimage will be the end,  
And flowers will shine in this now barren plot  
And fame upon it through the years descend:  
But many a heart upon each simple cross  
Will hang the grief, the memory of its loss.

*John William Streets was born on 24 March 1886 to William and Clara. Will, as he was known to the family, was the eldest of 12 children. He lived at 16 Portland Street, Whitwell, Derbyshire.*

*On 1 July 1916 Sergeant John William Streets moved with the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion York & Lancaster Regiment into the assembly trenches behind John Copse on the Somme battlefield. The attack was launched at 07.30 hours. Will's battalion went in on the second wave. Will was wounded and made his way back to the British line to get his wound treated. He was seen going to help another wounded man but he subsequently disappeared.*

*Will's body was missing for 10 months before it was identified; it was found in the area of No-Man's Land. On 1 May 1917 he was officially listed as "Killed".*



*Connaught British Military Cemetery on the Somme battlefield near Thiepval.*

## Reading - 2 Timothy 4: 6-8

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

*Short reflection*

*The congregation stands*

### **Hymn** Abide with me

**1. Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;  
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.**

**2. Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.  
Change and decay in all around I see.  
O thou who changest not, abide with me.**

**3. I need thy presence every passing hour.  
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.**

**4. I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless,  
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.**

**5. Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes.  
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**

*Words: H. F. Lyte (1793 – 1847)*

*Music: W. H. Monk (1823 – 89)*

*Abide with me was the hymn of 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion - Durham Light Infantry*

*The congregation sits*

# Remembering

## In Flanders field

by John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

*Lieutenant Colonel **John McCrae**, MD (November 30, 1872 – January 28, 1918) was a Canadian poet, physician, author, artist and soldier during World War I, and a surgeon during the Second Battle of Ypres, in Belgium. He is best known for writing the famous war memorial poem "In Flanders Fields". McCrae died of pneumonia near the end of the war.*



Eternal God, our refuge and strength, on this day we remember before you all who experienced the battle on the Somme: those who faced the terrible waste and devastation, who fought against all the odds, endured the clinging mud, and the squalor of the trenches. We recall with thanksgiving the loyalty shown to comrades and the bravery of those who overcame their fear, the courage of those who daily faced the pounding of artillery, gun-fire and shrapnel. May we never forget the devastating loss of this battle, the anxiety on the home-front, and the sacrifices that were made. Through our remembrances today, strengthen our resolve to oppose naked aggression, to defend the weak, and to speak your word of peace in times of conflict and insecurity. This we ask in the name of the Prince of peace, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### **Before Action**

By W. N. Hodgson

By all the glories of the day  
And the cool evening's benison  
By that last sunset touch that lay  
Upon the hills when day was done,  
By beauty lavishly outpoured  
And blessings carelessly received,  
By all the days that I have lived  
Make me a soldier, O Lord.

By all of all man's hopes and fears  
And all the wonders poets sing,  
The laughter of unclouded years,  
And every sad and lovely thing;  
By the romantic ages stored  
With high endeavour that was his,  
By all his mad catastrophes  
Make me a man, O Lord.

I, that on my familiar hill  
Saw with uncomprehending eyes  
A hundred of thy sunsets spill  
Their fresh and sanguine sacrifice,  
Ere the sun swings his noonday sword  
Must say good-bye to all of this; –  
By all delights that I shall miss,  
Help me to die, O Lord.

*Hodgson (born 3 January 1893) was a pupil at Durham School and the son of a bishop. After studying at Oxford, he volunteered in 1914 and was commissioned into the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the*

*Devonshire Regiment. He was bombing officer for his battalion during the attack, and was killed by a machine gun positioned at a shrine whilst taking grenades to the men in the newly captured trenches. The bullet went through his neck, killing him instantly – 1 July 1916.*  
*The congregation stands*

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old,  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning  
We will remember them.  
**We will remember them.**

### ***Two Minutes Silence is kept***

When you go home, tell them of us and say  
For your tomorrow, we gave our today.

### **Reading - Romans 8: 35-39**

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### *Short reflection*

Jesus said: "Today you will be with me in paradise."

As our service draws to a close you are invited to share Christ's light around the congregation by lighting a candle from the Paschal Candle;  
We do this in remembrance of those who gave their lives for our freedom at The Battle of the Somme and in all conflicts since;  
As a sign of our hope that wars will cease and the whole world will live in peace and concord;  
And as a reminder that even in the darkness of war and distress Christ's light of hope shines by the sun of day and the moon and stars of night, and is a light that cannot be extinguished.

*During this act of remembrance, the final movement from Faure's Requiem 'In Paradisum' will be played:*

*In paradisum deducant te Angeli; in tuo adventu suscipiant te martyres, et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Ierusalem. Chorus angelorum te suscipiat, et cum Lazaro quondam paupere æternam habeas requiem.*

"May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs receive you at your arrival and lead you to the holy city Jerusalem. May choirs of angels receive you and with Lazarus, once poor man, may you have eternal rest."

Bring us, O Lord God at our last awakening,  
into the house and gate of heaven:  
to enter into that gate, and dwell in that house,  
where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light;  
no noise nor silence, but one equal music;  
no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession;  
no foes nor friends, but one equal communion,  
in one equal eternity,  
in the habitation of your glory.

**Amen.**

## Looking Forward

*The congregation stands*

**1. Thy hand, O God, has guided  
thy flock, from age to age;  
the wondrous tale is written,  
full clear, on every page;  
our fathers owned thy goodness,  
and we their deeds record;  
and both of this bear witness:  
one Church, one faith, one Lord.**

**2. Thy heralds brought glad tidings  
to greatest, as to least;  
they bade men rise, and hasten  
to share the great King's feast;  
and this was all their teaching,  
in every deed and word,  
to all alike proclaiming  
one Church, one faith, one Lord.**

**3. When shadows thick were falling,  
and all seemed sunk in night,  
thou, Lord, didst send thy servants,  
thy chosen sons of light.  
On them and on thy people  
thy plenteous grace was poured,  
and this was still their message:  
one church, one faith one Lord.**

**4. Through many a day of darkness,  
through many a scene of strife,  
the faithful few fought bravely,  
to guard the nation's life.  
Their Gospel of redemption,  
sin pardoned, man restored,  
was all in this enfolded:  
one Church, one faith, one Lord.**

**5. And we, shall we be faithless?  
Shall hearts fail, hands hang down?  
Shall we evade the conflict,  
and cast away our crown?  
Not so: in God's deep counsels  
some better thing is stored;  
we will maintain, unflinching,  
one church, one faith, one Lord.**

**6. Thy mercy will not fail us,  
nor leave thy work undone;  
with thy right hand to help us,  
the victory shall be won;  
and then, by men and angels,  
thy name shall be adored,  
and this shall be their anthem:  
one Church, one faith, one Lord.**

*Words: E. H. Plumptre (1821 – 91)*

*Music: Basil Harwood (1859 – 1949)*

*The congregation sits*

O God our light and our defence,  
breathe your gentle Spirit over the wastes of our world.

Protect our memories from the infection of hate,  
that we may live free from fear and resentment.

May the light of Christ lead us  
out of the valley of the shadow of death  
onto paths of reconciliation, forgiveness and peace  
for the sake of the world your Son came to save.

**Amen.**

**Choir**      Go forth into the World in peace

*The congregation stands*

May God the Holy Trinity  
guard and defend you on every side,  
sustain you in times of difficulty,  
and strengthen you in faith and hope;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit  
be with you and all whom you love,  
now and always.

**Amen.**

During the Organ Voluntary the Choir and Ministers depart.

Hymns reproduced using St Giles CCL License – M81107  
Liturgical Materials © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England

